

T News Letter **TDARS**

G3ZME
G6ZME

TELFORD AND DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

www.TDARS.org.uk

FOUNDED 1969

www.TelfordHamfest.co.uk

Issue 308

Oct.– Nov. 2022

www.TDARS.org.uk

Programme

www.telfordhamfest.co.uk

- September 21 'HF Contesting' presentation by John Warburton G4IRN (+ Webex)
- September 28 'The RSGB Brickworks Project' - by Graham G7LMF (+ Webex)
- October 5 Committee meeting (Webex) + 2m net (144.600 MHz FM) 8pm.
- October 12 JOTA Preparations and volunteer list. (see next !)
- Oct. 14-15 (W/E) Jamboree On The Air (JOTA) at Wellington Scout Hut - organiser G7LMF.**
- October 19 TDARS Equipment Library and check evening. What is available ?
- October 26 Hallowe'en Soup and a Roll (social evening)
- November 2 Committee meeting (Webex) + 2m net (144.600 MHz FM) 8pm.
- November 9 Members' 10 minute talks evening (+ Webex ?)
- November 16 Surplus Equipment Sale. (10% go to club funds).
- November 23 GB3TF and how to access rooms etc. using DTMF to access the world
(John, M0JZH).
- November 30 Radio Propagation from VLF to microwave. (Martyn, G3UKV)
- December 7 Committee meeting (Webex) + 2m net (144.600 MHz FM) 8pm.
- December 14 Club Christmas Dinner—The Grazing Cow at Lawley. Details to follow.**
- December 21 Mince Pie Social Evening LWVH
- December 28 No Meeting at LWVH, but Club Net 144.600MHz FM at 8pm

Committee Meetings via Webex Online :

For Equipment Loans & Returns contact Don M0TBQ.

For "RSGB Brickworks" scheme (Club or Individual) —enquiries to Graham G7LMF
For Morse Training and Morse Proficiency Tests Martyn G3UKV or Eric M0KZB.

Radio Amateur Exams- Latest: Contact Graham G7LMF training@tdars.org.uk

Editorial

A lot of water has passed under the bridge since the last Newsletter in early July. Many meetings have taken place outside of our usual meeting place in LW Village Hall, since the weather has been warm/hot and mostly dry. Apart from two popular meetings in the Village Field, we have visited the ex-radio station at Criggion, had a couple of DF ('fox hunts') around the village, used Webex for committee meetings, and of course had our annual HamFest which also includes the UK's G-QRP Buildathon and Conventio at Harper Adams University in Edgmond. (Pgs 4 & 8)

TDARS Membership this year is about normal (mid 40's), but there has been a marked decline in attendance at our meetings at LWVH. Perhaps this is down to the content of these HQ meetings, which have tended to focus on preparation or follow up to other activities, such as the HamFest or contest operations. But this will change as Autumn and Winter creep up on us, and at least seven meetings will have a specific radio focus in the period up to Christmas. (see page 1).

So, I would appeal to members (and prospective members) to come along to those meetings at the Village Hall and share in the activities that the Committee has arranged at its monthly meetings. I'm confident that you will enjoy and perhaps learn more about our shared hobby by being present.



Telfordhams



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MIV



Editorial P.S. :: TDARS CHRISTMAS DINNER — Wednesday December 14th

I notice the first Christmas gift adverts have started appearing on TV, 3 months early —ugh! However, I make no apology for mentioning that Simon has booked a TDARS Christmas meal for members and family and friends at the Grazing Cow (or “Blazing Row” as Simon calls it . . .) in Lawley. The committee has decided that it would be a good time to have a celebratory meal, as in pre-covid days, at this period of festivities. In the past, we have had a very good turnout for such a meal, and the Grazing Cow is at a central location for the area, with good car parking and modest prices for a tasty repast. A menu (and prices) have not yet been announced, but a preliminary booking has been made. Full details to follow. Please consider joining us at that time, even if you’ve never attended an outside TDARS meal before—they really are enjoyable occasions. **MIV**



Photo: M0JZH

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Telford HamFest 'Lucky Programme' winner 2022 was Paddy O'Reilly G4MAD from the Rugby area. It was an Anytone 778UV mobile 2/70 Tcwr. Here Simon G0UFE makes the presentation on Sunday afternoon.

TELFORD & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY : 2022-23

CHAIRMAN: Simon Bird G0UFE (telfordslivewire@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 01952 401018)

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Martyn Vincent G3UKV (ukv@ukv.me.uk Tel:01952 255416)

SECRETARY: John Humphreys M0JZH (m0jzh@yahoo.co.uk Tel:07824 737716)

TREASURER: Paul Athersmith M0PLA (paul.athersmith@gmail.com Tel:07966 969230)

CURATOR : Don Nicholls M0TBQ (donsnicholls@outlook.com Tel: 01952 411680)

TRAINING and 'Beyond Exams': Graham Cowan G7LMF (training@tdars.org.uk)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Martyn Vincent G3UKV (01952 255416 or 07421 001166)

PUBLICITY/WEBMASTER : Dave GOCER (davekh@gmail.com)

Committee: Graham G7LMF; Ian M0IRP; Village Hall Committee Liaison officer Martin 2E0TRO; QSL Manager Paul M0PNN; Assist Curator: Kevin G8UPF; Trophies/Certs: Martyn G3UKV.

Qtc: News & Information



TDARS MEETINGS EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING HELD NORMALLY AT LITTLE WENLOCK VILLAGE HALL WITH SOME ONLINE (Webex) STREAMING OF APPROPRIATE PRESENTATIONS: PLEASE CHECK FRONT PAGE LISTING FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS.

Please note: A current membership card may be required to borrow TDARS equipment. Please return borrowed equipment promptly .

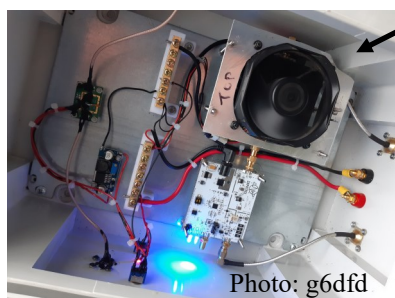
TDARS on-air nets have been rather quiet, of late.

80 metre SSB +/- 3.657MHz. Mondays, Fridays from 08:45 hours local.

2 metre FM 144.600 MHz Sundays from 21:00 hours local. No doubt there are other regular on-air meetings too, such as weekdays from ~8 am, starting on 145.5 MHz calling frequency FM.

Satellite comms. also seem to be featuring lately in the area . . . Robin G1MHU mentions working NA1SS, an astronaut on the ISS (International Space Station) - 145.990MHz up (PL67) & 437.800MHz down. And here's Simon G0UFE on the Little Wenlock Field, >>> demonstrating a Low Orbiting Satellite communication system.

Also Mike G6DFD had a look inside a QO-100 narrow band equipment build and took this photo (not sure whose kit—Ed !)



Crossed yagis for 2 and 70 Sat. Comm.



Photo: Mark 2E0HXP

Little Wenlock Village Field is a very convenient area for tatting with radio—plenty of space, short grass underfoot, no cow pats, and access to an outdoor AC power supply, courtesy of the Huntsman pub. Not quite so good by the autumn as the dark nights move in, but the bar is only yards away from the field. Here's a few more shots taken this summer:- (pics. By Tony M0TZM, Mark 2E0HXP, Dave G0CER—zoom in for detail !)



The Club received 99% positive feedback during and after the G-QRP Convention/social/Buildathon at Harper Adams Uni, with the only mumble that the buffet was running low in variety of food as the evening (Saturday) wore on. The G-QRP organisers were delighted with the event, and to their credit, provided all three speakers and their presentations (streamed live) at the Telford HamFest on Sunday. Current membership of G-QRP is over 4000—a huge potential audience.

For a start, here's a completed 2022 Buildathon project, a Kanga End Fed Half-Wave (EFHW) tuning unit, with inbuilt SWR indicator, which about 17 guys built on Saturday evening at a total cost of just £15. This one was built by Aled G0UCI of Newport.

Then the three G-QRP presentations took place on Sunday. At 11:00 - 'Getting Started with Microprocessors' by Martin Evans, GM5JDG, author of the book 'Arduino in Action'. Martin's talk focused on using microprocessors in QRP radios.



This was followed at midday by The G-QRP Club Scratch Build Group Project by Steve Hartley, G0FUW. Steve's talk covered the 17m Sudden SSB transceiver modules and more.



Photo:G0UCI

And the final talk at 13:30 - 'The Writings of the Rev. George Dobbs, G3RJV' by Michael Clarke, M5MTC. Michael has been compiling a bibliography of work of G3RJV. His talk covered everything from Ladybird books to the

Practical Wireless series "Carrying on In the Practical Way". Michael also showed many examples of the G3RJV projects included in his talk.



Steve, G0FUW shows just some of the numerous G-QRP construction projects in the lecture room.

And finally—on Sunday the G-QRP organisers, led by Graham G3MFJ (shown here....) manned their own stand, which included the well-known G-QRP 'shop'. (photos:G3UKV)



The contribution of G-QRP to the success of the Telford HamFest weekend is amazing. Thank you all concerned.

Recent Club Members' Contest Entries and Results:

Although we are not a contest club, several members have made their mark in recent months: From Dave G0CER, who sent in a report for his claimed IOTA score early in August, with this commentary:

"Very promising start - I had got my station set up and no interruptions due - I entered and hope to win the single op. low power, island, SSB unassisted section as per a couple of previous years - one I received a Quace dish award from GMDX. I'm not too sure this year.

My set up is FT991A (backup set FT897D), Inverted L wire H422 trapped antenna (same as club uses), 3ele 10m beam (both on SCAM10 mast which was a palaver to get mounted)

To be honest I never felt quite 'with it' for most of the contest - I carried on and 2:30 I had been hearing the same people for about an hour, so decided to sleep for 3 hours. However that 3 hours became 5 hours losing me plenty of points on the lower bands.

Contin>>>>>

[Dave's claimed score 227,957 pts, 264 QSOs, 101 Islands—Ed]



E.g. Like entries versus Like entries—I entered non-dxpeditions, SSB, no dxcluster assistance, 24hours and low 100w power. I was second to PA/ON4TO - I do like doing the IOTA contest. “

Band	Qs	Mults
80:	209	46
40:	289	60
20:	471	79
15:	240	46
10:	109	19
Total:	1318	250
Total Score	2,532,500	

Result:- “ That makes two of us Dave. I came first in the UK in the 'Non-DXpedition, CW only, Assisted, High Power' section. Seems like I won a trophy too. Agreed - IOTA is a great contest! “ (e-mail 14/9)



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Grumpy Old URT ramblings... by Peter G4URT

The first really notable event was on the 22nd of July. I wandered into the shack after shopping in Shrewsbury and turned everything on. The 2m FT8 screen was alive with EA stations but amongst them was a prefix that I didn't recognise – CN8LI – so I worked it quickly then put it through QRZ.COM. Blimey, Morocco on 2m from Shropshire! First time I've ever worked a North African station using tropo / SpE in 40 years of 2m operation. And most of that from 250 miles closer to North Africa in JO00 (or AK in old money) ! Looking at PSKReporter, he worked about 8 UK stations in 15 or so minutes then disappeared. Still, another DXCC prefix and more dollars invested for a card.


Second notable event was during the Perseids meteor shower. The shower sort of kicked off on the 12th so I concentrated on it that day. Next day I was perusing Facebook when an entry came up regarding the D2TX EME dxpedition to Angola which had already started and about which I'd totally forgotten. At this time the moon was quite low, but thought I'd give it a go and at 3 degrees above the horizon worked him that evening for the DXCC. You have to take your hat off to Bernie ZS2TX who was the operator. He originally stated that to activate Angola for the first time on EME he would have to take a 6000km round trip from his home in SA! However, due to reports of bad roads he had to do an extra 500km detour on the return journey thus cutting his operating days down. And we think the potholes in Shropshire are bad.

With regards to working the Perseids it was mainly a case of working enough stations to get some slides together for a forthcoming Meteor Scatter lecture coming to a venue near you next year. Over the space of 3 days ZB2GI (Gibraltar) and myself tried to complete. On the 1st day he could decode me but I couldn't decode him. The 2nd day it was vice versa and on the 3rd it reverted back to day 1! Alex only runs 50w to a small beam so 1800+km is a bit marginal. Finally I decided that I would get some sort of station together for the LWVH meet on the 24th of August and to kill the second bird get something together for the Shropshire MS meet (this was before I knew about D2TX which proved to be a better choice as it was on the same day). Initially I was going to use an FT817 that I bought years ago but it seems to be lacking in power – blown finals? I had bought a secondhand Signalink USB soundcard with the leads for the FT817 a couple of weeks previously but looking at the Signalink website it looked like that internal jumper settings and lead were applicable to my IC910X.

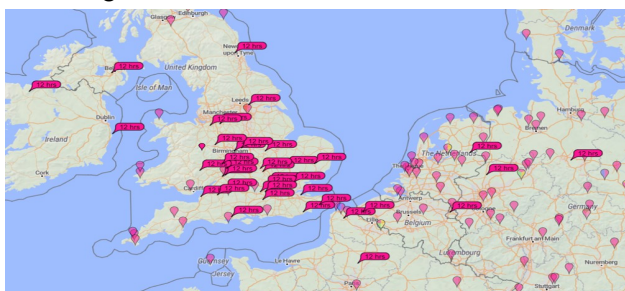
However, I had to test the setup which proved to be a pain. I could only use my array but that has an LNA permanently wired in (I use separate Tx and Rx lines). I suppose I could have rigged up some sort of temporary beam but I couldn't be bothered. Bad move. So, testing the receive side went well, but when it came to testing the TX side I had to disconnect everything and putting a load on – now, I really didn't want to put 50w through my LNA did I?

Guess what? The receive side tested well as did the tx test into a load but sometime after I had re-connected the rig to the array the computer went in TX mode which promptly put many watts into a device in the LNA that doesn't like many watts... That meant that the horizontal component of my array was dead. And it was the 13th August which was D2TX day. And it was damn hot. And the mast had to be luffed down and the LNA changed over in the heat... GRUMPY?? I was not the happiest of bunnies. Anyway, I have a few spare devices, so a plea went out for anyone who could repair the LNA. Paul and Heather were the first to answer the plea...

The next thing to sort out was some sort of mast for the antenna for the demo. I do have a /P EME arrangement which uses a rotator at the bottom of a surveyors tripod. The rotator was not needed for display so it was substituted for a mushy pea can. Seemed to work OK. For the antenna I decided to resurrect my old /P 2m beam that I probably built 10 years ago but hadn't used in ages. This is a G4CQM design whose beams I also used for a 2m array. This one is designed to be (relatively) portable, lightweight and easy to set up (and dismantle afterwards). Anyway, after a scare from both the MetOffice and the BBC weather which prophesied heavy rain, the evening went well. The system put together quite easily albeit it took a bit of time. Equipment was an Icom IC910X, Signalink USB soundcard and a G4CQM designed 10 element yagi. Power was kept down to about 50 watts. Notice the 'opposition' on the RHS of the photo!



However, conditions were either poor or there wasn't anyone about as I only made 3 contacts despite much CQing. Or was that really the case? A perusal of PSKReporter (below) which is a website that collates digital activity revealed the below activity from G3ZME/P. I counted 39 stations in England, NI, Eire, France, Holland, Belgium and Germany had received us. Maybe the stations were switched on but the operators were watching TV? Or maybe as the prophets of doom have predicted and that FT8 is killing communication on the amateur bands? Personally I think FT8 is great if you are DXing, but if you just want to have a natter then forget it !



The best was DL5OCD in JO42xg for 871km. It just goes to show how far a 2m signal will go under flat conditions with an 'average' set up albeit from a site with some height.

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GB3TF 70cm Voice Repeater update. By John M0JZH—NoV holder



Those of you who monitor / use our repeater GB3TF must have noticed an increase in the amount of odd noise that comes from the repeater from time to time. This is not a fault with the repeater, it is a problem with the spacing that we have with the NoV for GB3TF. With the spacing so close, it makes the filtering required to make GB3TF work correctly very critical.

To correct this, on Wednesday this week (21st September) GB3TF will once again be removed from service in order to once again align the cavity filters. The filters were recently calibrated by Martyn G3UKV, however it was in the height of summer, and now that temperatures have subsided the issues are now getting increasingly (and frustratingly) more often. GB3TF will be off air for approx. one week.

In order to assist in the effectiveness of GB3TF and to help prevent this from becoming a regular issue, we are also looking at getting the frequencies of the repeater spacings changed from 1.6MHz to hopefully a 7.6MHz split. If/when this happens, in order to once again use GB3TF your radios will need to be retuned. The receive frequency of your 'TF radio (433.200) will need to change to around 430.x MHz, and the transmit frequency offset (by 7.6MHz) to around 438.x MHz. We will let you know as and when we get detail from RSGB / OFCOM.

What is a decibel ? by Paul G8AQA

A number of engineers were interviewed and a question asked "What is a dB ?". The one who got the job replied "About 26%".

In contest terms this means that if your rig is improved by 1dB you should, all else being equal, reach stations 26% further away. In a contest this means that you could cover an area about 1.6 times greater which could mean 60% more stations.

If you have improved by 2dB your potential area coverage goes up a massive 2.5 times.

We know that all else is not equal, firstly because stations are not evenly distributed in all directions. It does however indicate the importance of reducing your feeder losses to the absolute minimum.

Note:- When you add dBs then you must multiply the powers. So

2db is $1.26 \times 1.26 = 1.59$

3dB is $1.26 \times 1.26 \times 1.26 = 2.000$ and so on.

Most people know that doubling the power is adding 3dB.

All of these numbers have been rounded very slightly but are good enough for practical purposes.

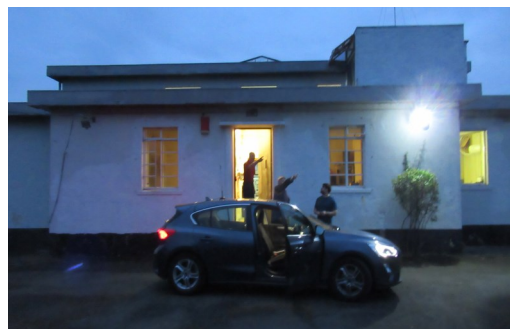
Paul G8AQA

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Criggion Radio Station Visit (August 17th) by TDARS

Thanks to Robert GW6GBY, club members had the opportunity to visit this historic site in Powys. However often you visit the site, there is always something new to see and be amazed at. Valves reign supreme (plus a lot more !)

Here are a few faces who clearly enjoyed the experience . . .



THAT
WAY
TO
THE
PUB
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Thanks for Newsletter input this time:

**John M0JZH, Peter G4URT, Paul G8AQA, Mark 2E0HXP, Robert GW6GBY, Ken G3YKI,
Robin G1MHU, Dave G0CER, Aled G0UCI, John G4IRN, Tony M0TZM, Mike G6DFD**

Next edition December 22 / January 2023
Can YOU contribute something?— Results in a better Newsletter !

Memories of Telford HamFest and G-QRP Convention / Buildathon 3/4 September 2022:

OUTSIDE and INSIDE :



SOCIAL AND FOOD :



SPECIALIST STANDS :



Bring & Buy



S.L.U.G. & Linux



Eric-Shrops.RAYNET



Geoff, G(J)4ICD –baluns etc



Simon 2E0MRS
Military mobile
radio station



OSCAR-100 Demo Station



Page 9 EXTRA

A few items omitted/overlooked from the recent posting of Oct/November Newsletter:

Geoff Brown G(J)4ICD who had a car boot outlet (see photo page 8) at Telford HamFest is a very well known personality in amateur radio circles. As well as making a gratis donation to TDARS at the event, he also placed this comment on his website:

TELFORD HAMFEST

Well done Telford ARS, superb event, sold over 75 matching units and lots more goodies, superb accommodation and food etc, and thanks Martyn and club members for all the help and certainly the best HAMFEST in the UK.

Geoff's informative website is certainly worth a view: <https://rfcomms.co.uk/gb1/>

Also from the aftermath of the Telford HamFest, Graham G7LMF took this shot of a group of members who were able to enjoy the 'freebie' glass of beer at the Lamb Inn, just up the road from HAU: Worth commenting that there were about twice this number assisting at the week-end, and perhaps others will join us for a glass at The Lamb next September (2023) for another HamFest !!



VHF NFD July 2022 Results:

The TDARS entry for this summer were not quite up to the top place (2019) in the 'Mix and Match' section of this major RSGB contest.

Of the 4 bands activated (6m, 2m, 70cm, 23cm) our ratings slipped a little, except on 23cm, where we came first in the Low Power section.

As a result, we slipped behind M0NFD/P (Northern Fells CG) and G2BQY/P (Trowbridge & DARC) into third place overall. However, perhaps as one member said—taking part is more important than winning. It was a great weekend for those taking part.



On the topic of club involvement in contests, the **RSGB Tuesday/Thursday UKAC** continue until December, covering from 6 metres up to the microwave bands.

Our current positions (mid-September) for "local" clubs are. . . .

6m—10th 4m—8th 2m—13th 70cm—8th 23cm—15th SHF—15th

Giving an overall placing of TENTH in the results—a useful target to maintain for 2022 entries.

And finally—a little plug for local Morse Code practice for anyone at home during the week :

Special Call GB2CW sends CW on 3605KHz every Thursday morning at 9:00 pm (local).

About 5 minutes each of 5wpm, 8wpm and 12wpm of text, plus a couple of minutes of just numbers (0-9) at the end. Readback (LSB) follows each of these transmissions.